



editor's choice

## Editorial

by HARRY HUSKINS

The Allen report has been quite a relief to the community of Schreiber and it seems the only thing that remains is for the School Board to remove the Motion closing the school. Then the town can put its fears of losing the school away and move on to other things. The Allen Report does make it clear, however, that one of the root causes of the problem was too much concern with making the system efficient, and not enough concern or understanding of what the system was all about.

So maybe it's time for a lighter look at effectiveness, efficiency and efficiency reports in general.

### An Efficiency Expert Reports on A Symphony at the Royal Festival Hall, London.

For considerable periods, the four oboe players had nothing to do. The number should be reduced and the work spread more evenly over the whole of the concert, thus eliminating peaks of activity.

All the twelve violins were playing identical notes; this seems unnecessary duplication. The staff of this section should be drastically cut. If a larger volume of sound is required, it could be obtained by electronic apparatus.

Much effort was absorbed in playing of demi-quavers; this seems to be an unnecessary refinement. It is recommended that all notes should be rounded up to the nearest quaver. If this was done it would be possible to use trainees and lower-grade operatives more extensively.

There seems to be too much repetition of some musical passages. Scores should be drastically pruned. No useful purpose is served by repeating on the horns a passage that has already been handled by the strings. It is estimated that if all redundant passages were eliminated, the whole concert time of two hours could be reduced to twenty minutes and there would be no need for an intermission.

The conductor agrees generally with these recommendations, but expressed the opinion that there might be some falling off in box-office receipts. In that event it should be possible to close sections of the

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### GRANDPA AND ME



### BY MARK TURRIS

# The Allen Report

THE ALLEN REPORT  
An Opinion by Jack Stokes, MPP Lake Nipigon

The Report of the Commission of Inquiry Regarding Small Secondary Schools in Northern Ontario is an excellent document and does great credit to the author Roger Allan.

It is a thoughtful and precise account of what he heard and what he observed. More than anything else, Mr. Allan pointed out very graphically the problems fac-

ing small secondary schools in northern Ontario and made recommendations to the Ministry and particularly the Lake Superior Board of Education which will, if implemented, address most of the serious problems which mitigate against equality of educational opportunities for our students.

The Recommendation to maintain the two campus organization for the Lake Superior High School is welcome news for the Township of Schreiber, its students, parents and teachers

and is a credit to all who argued so persuasively for its retention.

Recommendations to increase the school weighting factor by the introduction of an isolation factor will be an essential improvement in a new approach to an educational delivery system in the north.

The formation of a program Council by the Boards of Education east of Thunder Bay to provide cooperative action in improving secondary school education has much merit.

The Recommendations dealing with a section 63 review under the Assessment Act is one which if implemented would remove much of the animosity which exists between the four principal communities within the Lake Superior Board's jurisdiction. This along with the Recommendation that Trustee distribution should be based on equalized residential and farm assessment should foster a new era of cooperation and mutual trust among communities and board members.

The laudatory comments regarding the competence and dedication of the senior administration in the Lake Superior Board is both comforting and reassuring. This report if implemented by the Ministry and the Board along with a fair measure of goodwill on the part of all concerned can provide a well rounded educational experience for our children, our most precious resource and the real reason for having the system in the first place.

Well done Mr. Allan.

auditorium entirely, with a consequential saving overhead expenses, lighting, attendants, etc. If the worst came to the worst, the whole thing could be abandoned and the public could be removed to the Albert Hall instead.

If this should happen, it is further recommended, that a permanent efficiency report section with an initial staff of four be set up to actualise further savings. The

section would require only one senior administrative position (Ex. Director) and thus stay within present staffing guidelines. As can be seen, the new efficiency section can be established with funds already budgeted for the Royal Festival Hall, but not now needed in light of this report. Therefore the establishment of the new section will not exceed this year's budget, and so will cost nothing.

## Arthur Black

# What colour is kangaroo milk?

Remember the good old days when you could spend your lunch hours and coffee breaks fantasizing about the job you wished you had?

That was back in the Flush Times, when jobs were as plentiful as bear scats at a garbage dump. No more. Nowadays, upwards of a million and a half adult Canadians spend their waking hours fantasizing about a job -- any job. They're unemployed and they'd take anything. Forget glamour, perks and high wages.

Still, I can't help being somewhat envious of Susan Guinn. If I had to come back in another life as a working stiff, I wouldn't mind having a crack at her job.

Susan Guinn? She answers the phone in an office down in Toronto. But she's not your standard "Who-shall-I-say-is-cal-

ling" receptionist.

It's the questions she gets over the phone!

"What colour is kangaroo milk?"

"How long is the pregnancy term for elephants?"

"What do you call a group of owls?"

"What's the correct term for a herd of rhinoceroses?"

"How often do baby squirrels nurse?"

Those are just a few of the off-the-wall queries Susan Guinn routinely fields in a working day. She's the librarian at the Metropolitan Toronto Zoo. And whenever she gets a question that stumps her, there's a 1,000-volume Zoo library lining the wall behind her desk to help her out.

The library function of the zoo has never been widely publicized,

but it's there, and Ms. Guinn says she averages about 10 calls a day from quizzical citizens. And, she says, the calls almost always start off the same way: "I know this sounds like a silly question, but..."

Ms. Guinn doesn't mind. And she doesn't consider the questions silly either.

What kind of people phone up a zoo? "Often it's a couple of guys in a bar trying to settle a bet," she says. Students on the final stretch of a Biology term paper are regular callers too. Also, artists phone, wanting to know the colour of an elephant's eye (brown); or a camel's tongue (sort of a brownish-red).

Then too, Ms. Guinn often hears from people with "urgent" zoological problems. Like the fellow who called up, somewhat

breathless, to announce he'd been chasing a bat around his bedroom with a tennis racquet for two nights in a row. Aside from emergency lessons from Bjorn Borg, did she have any advice?

"I told him the best thing to do was to block the hole where the bat was coming in," says Ms. Guinn, matter-of-factly.

Of course. But wouldn't it be fun to have Susan Guinn's job? She gets calls from as far away as Saskatchewan and New Brunswick. And she has a near-Pen-Pal relationship with a man in Holland "who wants to know everything about tigers."

Susan Guinn doesn't know all the answers to the questions she gets, but working at the Metro Zoo she's in a great position to find those answers. And with every answer she discovers, Su-

san Guinn learns something about the Real World.

Speaking of answers, here are some for those questions posed earlier.

Kangaroo milk is white.

The pregnancy period for elephants is 22 months.

A group of owls is called a "parliament."

A herd of rhinos is known as a "crush."

Baby squirrels nurse every two hours.

I am reminded of the story about the woman visitor to the London Zoo, who asked the keeper whether a particular hippopotamus was a male or a female.

"Madam" huffed the keeper, "that is a question that should be of interest only to another hippopotamus."

